Appl. No. 09/672,879

REMARKS

Again, reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-4 and 6-33 are pending, claims 12-18 and 21-25 have been withdrawn as pertaining to non-elected restricted claims. Claims 1, 9, 10, 19, and 20 are independent, claims 1-4, 6-11, 19, and 20 have been amended and claims 26-33 have been added, and claim 5 has been canceled.

If the Examiner has any questions concerning this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By: _____
Michael K. Mutter
Reg. No. 29,680

MKM/JPK/sjl/lab

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000

Attachments: Marked-up Version of the claim

MARKED UP VERSION TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

19. (Amended) A receiving beam-forming apparatus [in which echo signals received by multiple ultrasonic transducer elements arranged in a linear form are sampled at a specific scanning frequency to obtain sample data, said receiving beam-forming apparatus] comprising:

a plurality of ultrasonic transducer elements arranged on a predetermined form;

a plurality of ultrasonic transducer elements receiving echo signals, where the transducer elements are sampled at a specific scanning frequency, forming sample data for a scanning cycle, where a scanning cycle is dependent on the scanning frequency;

a memory which stores the sample data [derived] from multiple scanning cycles;

[a sampling plane generator, which produces a continuous sample data train of a sampling plane of a specific angle by shifting the phase of or interpolating the sample data from the multiple scanning cycles;] and

a beamformer which forms a receiving beam in a specific direction using the sample data.